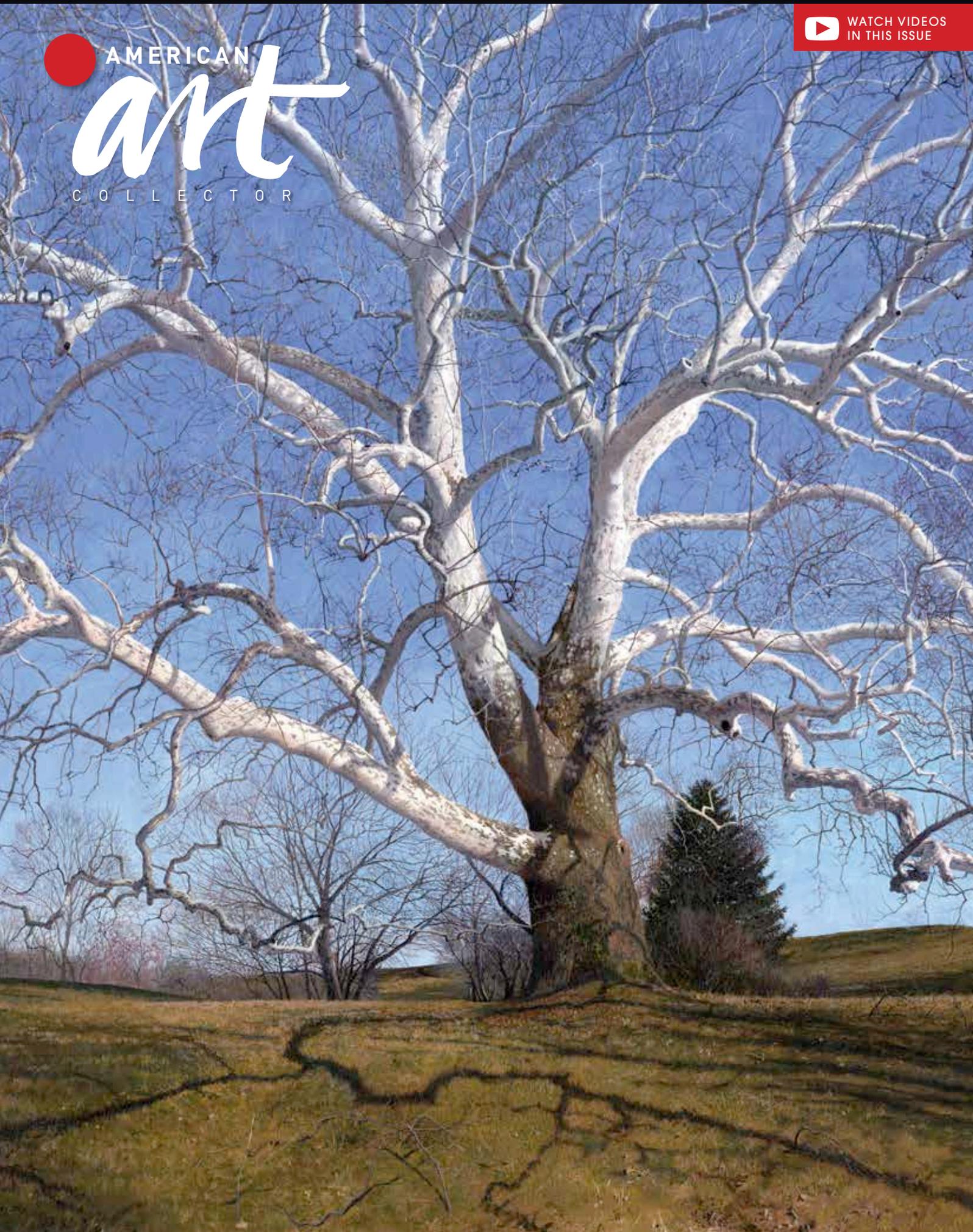


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Magic of still life

There is beauty in commonplace things, and many artists bring focus to that idea in works such as still lifes. The Gallery at Tree's Place in Orleans, Massachusetts, will highlight four of its leading still life artists in the upcoming show *Still Life That Moves You*.

Sarah Lamb, Carlo Russo, Dana Levin, and Steven J. Levin are a "tour de force in this genre," says the gallery owner Mike Donovan. "Each handles light and shadow with great detail and skill, and their compositions will both captivate and astound you with their beauty. If you are a fan of the magic of still life, this is an exhibition you don't want to miss."

Steven J. Levin says, "When I paint still lifes I take time to really look at the structure, form and texture of each object to try to highlight those aspects of it that are the most beautiful. I spend a lot of time just looking and trying out different lighting and viewpoints."

In *Eggshells*, he is "showing the delicacy of the eggs with the stack of broken shells, but also the smooth solidity of them," he says. "I put a strip of sky in the background to give added depth and to introduce another spot of color."

Russo takes seasonal flowers and exploits the bright

colors and welcoming feeling in both *The Visitor (Hollyhock and Delphinium)* and *Zinnias*.

"Summer is a respite for me in many ways," he says. "There is something about the atmosphere of a hot summer day—something comforting despite the weight of the heat and temperature. But more so, the colors of summer are what really grab me, especially summer flowers. The beautiful colors of the blooms and their unique forms are endlessly fascinating and make great subject matter for me. Despite the fact that I work indoors all day, I get to bring some small part of nature back into the studio with me."

Antique Fish Weathervane by Lamb takes something old and slightly fading and puts life back into it.

"Antique weather vanes have been an obsession of mine for the past few years," she explains. "Each is unique in its design, and I especially love the different patinas. They vary from verdigris copper to gold leaf that has been worn away over the years. The fish has a wonderful green-blue patina—copper that has turned as its aged—I thought the warm barn door in the background was a nice contrast."

For Dana Levin, each piece has a life of its own,

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Carlo Russo, *Zinnias*, oil on linen, 11½ x 11"

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Carlo Russo, *The Visitor (Hollyhock and Delphinium)*, oil on linen, 20½ x 13½"

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Dana Levin, *Opposites Attract*, oil on canvas, 18 x 20"

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Steven J. Levin, *Eggshells*, oil on linen mounted on panel, 8 x 13½"



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especially when working with cloth. “What I like about working with cloth is that it can be soft, angular, creased or smooth; the shadows can be sharp or barely noticeable,” she says. “I like how sometimes it reminds me of a landscape and sometimes of a body. It inspires a variety of sensations and I am not limited by anatomy as I am with the human figure.”

In her piece *Opposites Attract*, the artist uses the softness of the fabric to complement the hardness of the yellow jug.

“I usually need some time after I finish a painting in order to digest it,” she says of naming the piece. “In this case, once I had the name, I understood the painting better.”

Still Life That Moves You opens at The Gallery at Tree’s Place with a reception August 27 from 5 to 7 p.m. The artwork will remain on display through September 9. ●